

**Spiritualism.**

A damsel possessed with a spirit of divination followed the Apostles, crying, these men are the servants of the Most High God, which show unto us the way of salvation. Acts 16:17. "And this she did many days." But Paul being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

But now how about this damsel? What caused her to follow the Apostles and cry out in this manner, and this she did for many days? Was it a good spirit that caused her to do this? Did she desire to become a Christian? Was she under conviction? I do not believe that it was a good spirit that caused her to cry out in that way, or that she had a desire to become a Christian, for the following reasons: First, we have no account of her joining herself with the Disciples, neither with the Apostles or Lydia and her household; and in the second place, Paul would not have been grieved at her following them. But it would have been his utter delight to help her and to sympathize with her. That was the mission of his life; it was his meat and drink to help people on the way of salvation. It was the whole desire of his heart, and for that cause he suffered bonds and imprisonment.

But says one, was it not the truth she uttered, and doth not the Bible say that the devil is a liar? Would it be likely that the evil spirit would cause this girl to utter such words of truth in favor of the servants of God? Do you suppose that the devil cannot tell the truth? If you do, you are mistaken. If he can deceive somebody by telling the truth he is ready for an emergency. But what could have been his object in this case? This sooth-saying or fortune-telling as we call it, was utterly detestable to the Jews. It was contrary to their law. Hence for this damsel to follow these Apostles, the Jews knowing that she was possessed with a spirit of divination and her acknowledging them to be the servants of the Most High God would rather show as though the Apostles were of the same class of characters; or that they were in compact with her, and the miracles the Apostles wrought were done by the same power.

I take the position that satan devised this plan to injure the reputation of these men of God, and that is what grieved Paul. He turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her and he came out the same hour.

The best and only thing that Paul could do to convince the people that this spirit of divination was from the devil, and that he had the power in the name of Jesus Christ to cast him out, and the girl lost her power in that direction.

Now I want to say, as this circumstance has come up, that there are people in the world to-day who are similar possessed, and it grieves me to hear of people who profess to be Christians going after them and patronizing them. Just think of a Christian going to one who is possessed with an evil spirit for information. Do you not know that it is wrong to do so? But says one, don't you know that they can tell some things that have occurred and sometimes have foretold some things that have come to pass? Well suppose they did. But don't you know that the devil is at the bottom of it? If you suppose that He has no power in the world, or that he doth not know any thing, you are sadly mistaken. He doth some wonderful things in this world. But the hand of God is against all soothsayers, or fortune-tellers as we call them. I do not give this as merely my opinion, but they are plain Bible facts. Please read the 19th chapter of Acts where many who had practiced curious arts, brought their books together and burned them before all men, so mightily grew the Word of God and multiplied. To further show you that God is against all such work, turn to Deuteronomy 18th chapter. 9. "When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

10. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch.

11. Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizzard, or a necromancer.

12. For all that do these things are an abominations unto the Lord; and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

13. Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God.

14. For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times and unto diviners; but as for thee, the Lord thy God has not suffered thee so to do."

What is necromancy? The best author of the English Language tells us that it means the act of revealing future events by means of a pretended communication with the dead. Necromancy, modern spiritualism, God abhors it. He says he will drive it out before his people. But says one, can we not believe what we see with our eyes and hear with our ears? I say no, not every time. People have been gulled and hoodwinked beyond description with their eyes and ears wide open. But says one, suppose you were off in some strange neighborhood where no one knows anything of your ancestors, and they would call up your dead mother and describe her to you, tell how tall she was, tell the color of her hair, her complexion, describe all her features, the mole on her face and all about her; would you not believe that she was here? No sir, not a bit of it. Not I. My mother was a good Christian woman. She raised a family of nine children. Enjoyed poor health, but lived long enough to see all the children start in the Christian religion. She discharged her duty toward God and her family and when she died I believe that she was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. I firmly believe that she went straight through into the paradise of God and according to the word of God she is resting from her labors and her works will follow her, and I would feel sorry if some table-tipper could call her back to this dreary world. I would be very sorry to think that my dear old sainted mother would be spooking around some unholy necromancer's table. But how about the minute description? How will we get over that. I will tell you how I get over that. You remember reading in the Bible about King Saul, that disobedient, jealous hearted old man; the man who disobeyed God, then got jealous of his son-in-law David; tried to slay him; hunted him down like a partridge on the mountain. The spirit of God had left and the evil spirit was upon him. God would not answer him any more, and now when he was in deep trouble in his last extremity, instead of going down on his knees before his God, repenting in sackcloth and ashes, as he should have done, he now asks for a woman with a familiar spirit; the very thing that God hated. It looks as though he tried to get information independent of God. He goes down to the witch of Endor and asks her to call up Samuel the prophet. Samuel is described to Saul. Yes, that is Samuel says Saul. Now I believe the same devil that described Samuel to Saul through the witch of Endor, knows how your mother looked and mine. I guarantee he knows all about them, for they had many a combat with him through life. But thank God, they gained the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ and are now beyond his reach. Perhaps you think that is plain talk. So it is. I meant to be plain. I cannot be anything else. I believe the devil is at the bottom of all divination, sorcery, soothsaying, or necromancy; and the reason for my belief is because God has said in thundering tones on Sinai, that his hand is against it, and that he would drive it out before his people. Hence it must belong to the other side.

There are two great powers that control everything: the one is good, the other bad. The Bible is a lie, or this necromancy is of the devil. There is no getting around this. Take spiritualism if you want to. As for me I will stick to my old Bible, and when I get into deep trouble, instead of going out to hunt up some old hag from Egypt or some rollicking circle around the table of some hateful infidel—hateful because he hates and despises my Lord and Master—I will go into my closet, shut the door after me, and there, on my knees. It will lay my wants before him who has

said I will be your God and she shall be my people. He who has said, I will be with you always, even to the end of the world.

No wonder that Christ said, take heed that no man deceive you. The world is full of deception. Let us not come to the conclusion that there is no devil in the world, because we cannot see the split-hoofs and the horns on his head, a pitch fork in one hand and a hook in the other: as we see him pictured some times. The Bible tells us plainly that he is sometimes transformed into an angel of light, he is full of deception. He has more power in the world than some people are willing to acknowledge. He is called the prince and power of the air, and his deception is so great, that Christ said, that if it were possible he would deceive the very elect.

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**The Family Bible.**

The family Bible! How familiar its sacred pages. How often in the sunny days of childhood were we fed from its mamma, guided by a parental hand. When we look back to years that have past and gone how vividly the picture comes to our minds of little children grouped about the family Bible or seated around the old fireside hearing Bible stories. Those days and scenes can never be forgotten, though miles or death may separate us, years may roll by, affliction, sorrow and sadness may cloud our pathway, yet those stories will remain as fresh in our memory as in the days of our childhood. The old family Bible, we so often read from and talked about, will remain in our visions while life shall last.

The Bible what a Book of Books! No Christian home is complete without it. It is of value to the home of the rich as well as the poor. In it we find the rule of life and home government, women's true mission in life, and the sacredness of marriage, showing; duty of wife to husband, husband to wife, parent to child and child to parent.

Without it marriage would sink to depravity and what we now call home into a den of selfishness and barbaric lust. It inspires the little child with interest as much as the hoary old man, gives to both the glimpses of eternity and teaches the science of a better world.

You may have your library shelves filled, your children furnished with plenty of reading matter; but without the Bible home education is incomplete. Throw your books of fiction and love-sick tales in the fire, they destroy the young mind and bring disgrace and ruin. Bring the Bible to the front, have them read it, study it, talk with them about it, thus form the habit early in life. For daily Bible reading learn its sacred truths while the mind is easily impressed, and it can never be entirely eradicated therefrom.

It forms a healing balm for all our wounds, a comfort for our woes. In it we find that which gives us hopes of meeting those sainted ones who have crossed over the river. Oh! what a comfort to the house of mourning. How could it be checked without the promises and comfort given therein.

When our hearts are sad from some mental strain, when a state of melancholy has come over us, our desire for reading is gone and we shun every body, but the Bible alone can give us pleasure though the face be wet with tears and the heart be nearly breaking, it speaks peace to our weary souls and comforts our bleeding hearts.

Oh! what could we do without its advice? In all the books that great men have written there is not to be found such sublimity of thought combined with love and wisdom. In it alone we find that character which we should ever follow. It directs us through life and points out the way to eternal bliss. Blessed Bible! What a treasure, what a gift of gifts, nothing could a parent present to a child that would be of more value to them. May we ever cherish it, clasp it close to our hearts, read daily therefrom and ever keep in that path so plainly laid down therein.

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To do right is the bud, blossom and fruit of wisdom.